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ABSTRACT

Many professional 4-H staff members lack a sufficient background in the social sciences, fail to understand the complexity of the socialization task, and are not aware of the changes made by other socialization agents in the community. This paper is designed to help the professional 4-H adult worker improve his role as a socialization agent. Socialization, the process by which a person learns the ways of the group in order to function within it, is viewed from the perspective of the individual and society. Among society's socialization agents are the family, the peer group, and the school; the adult agent learns to work within the framework of these influences. Some of the difficulties confronting the adult socialization agent are changing expectations and roles, the impact of technology, lack of cooperation, and less of adult influence. Better recruitment and training techniques are suggested, as are planning, implementation, and evaluation of programs. A bibliography is included. (RS)

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SOCIALIZATION OF YOUTH : ROLE OF THE 4-H PROFESSIONAL

by

John Robert Freebern

A graduate problem submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree

of

Master of Science

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS III

LIST OF TABLES VI

INTRODUCTION 1

Chapter

I NATURE, PROCESS, AND IMPORTANCE OF SOCIALIZATION 5

From the Standpoint of the Individual
From the Perspective of Society
How the Process is Accomplished

II SOCIAL CHANGE IN THE AMERICAN SOCIETY 16

Relationship of Social Change to Socialization
Nature of Social Change
Examples of Social Change

III SOCIALIZATION AGENTS - THE FAMILY - THE PEER GROUP
THE SCHOOL 23

The American Family
The Youth Peer Group
The School System

IV DIFFICULTIES CONFRONTING THE ADULT SOCIALIZATION
AGENTS 32

Perceptions and Expectations
Impact of Technology
Coordination and Opportunities
Shifting Influence of Socialization Agents
Recruiting the Adult Socializer

Chapter Page

V IMPLICATIONS AND CONCLUSION 41

An Improved Sense of Reality
Better Leader Recruitment Techniques
Recognizing Coordination Difficulties
Recruiting and Training the Volunteer Leader
Planning, Implementing, and Evaluating Programs
Appreciating the Change and the Challenge
Recognizing a Role of the Professional 4-H Worker

BIBLIOGRAPHY 52

LIST OF TABLES

Table		Page
	Youth Enrolled in 4-H by Age Categories	7
	Stages in Personality Growth and Development	9
	Levels of Social Control	12

INTRODUCTION

"From the beginning, the essential objectives of 4-H Club Work have been couched in terms of optimum development of each individual boy and girl." (34 p264) "4-H projects are a means toward an end." The main goal of 4-H is to help the child develop into a "competent and productive citizen." These are examples of statements that a person hears and reads concerning the major goals of 4-H work. From this standpoint the professional 4-H worker can be considered to be primarily a socialization agent. Volunteer leaders can also be considered socializing agents. This in turn implies that the professional 4-H worker is a trainer of socialization agents.

In terms of qualifications for the roles of a youth socializer or trainer of socialization agents, the professional 4-H worker may not be as adequately equipped for the task as he should. Dr. Ronald Lippitt of the University of Michigan has stated that many professional youth socializers have only a vague notion as to what the end product of their socializing efforts is to be. (25 p336) They, the professionals, may be able to speak easily about activities and methods, but only haltingly about goals and desired ends.

The weakness of the professional 4-H worker in this respect may lie in three main areas:

- Many of the professional 4-H staff lack a sufficient background in the social sciences; sociology, psychology, or child development, for example. The male 4-H agent may be more deficient in this respect than the female agent. As an undergraduate he may have taken 40 to 60 hours of the physical sciences and only the required 8 to 10 hours of the social sciences.

- It is doubtful if many of the professional 4-H field staff understand, to the necessary degree, the complexity of the socialization task as it presents itself today as a consequence of societal change.

- 4-H agents may not be as appreciative or aware of the changes or adjustments being made or that have been made by other socialization agents in the community. The role, or potential role, of the 4-H socializer changes as these changes or adjustments are made.

This lack of understanding or deficiency on the part of the professional poses several problems if left untouched. The agent's effectiveness in planning, implementing, or evaluating programs will be adversely affected. So too, however,

will be the future training efforts aimed at the professional by his supervisors and/or colleagues. Unless an individaul has an adequate framework of knowledge into which new information can be fitted, examined or evaluated the full potential of the new knowledge will not be realized. For example, a debate or research article on the merits of societal intervention compared with parental education in the socialization of youth may not seem relevant or make sense to the professional 4-H worker. He may not adequately understand the socialization process and the difference between a "direct" or "indirect" agent.

It is proposed then that one way a professional 4-H worker can improve his role performance as a socialization agent is to increase his knowledge base of:

- The socialization process; who is involved, what takes place, and how is it accomplished.

- The nature and scope of societal change in our society and the resulting effect of such change on the socialization process of the young. The arena in which youth are socialized.

- The complexities or difficulties confronting adults attempting to help youth become socialized in today's American Society.

A difficult barrier confronting educational efforts designed to increase or expand the knowledge base of the professional

4-H worker is the attitude of the target audience. "Many socialization agents, both laymen and professionals, view scientists and science based theory as impractical and too complex to understand." (24 p369)

Chapters I through IV of this paper are intended to provide a brief background or taste of the socialization tas as it relates to youth today. In Chapter V, attention will be focused on the relevance of such a background for the efforts of the professional 4-H worker. The examples given in Chapter V represent some of the conclusions of the writer. They can hopefully be used as a starting for the reader's own conclusions.

CHAPTER I

Nature, Process, and Importance of Socialization

The study of socialization focuses upon the development of the individual as a social being and participant in society. (7 p3) An individual's behavior patterns or the way in which he will react to stimulation will depend on what he has learned and internalized to date in his socialization process. Socialization, or becoming socialized, is a unique experience for each individual. No two people will develop in quite the same manner.

We have stated that the central task of the 4-H professional worker is to help youth in this development. Chapter I will review the nature, process and importance of the socialization task. To start with we will look at the process from the perspectives of the individual and of society.

Socialization from the Standpoint of the Individual

Socialization is the process by which a person learns the ways of the group or of a given society so that he can function within it. (12 p4) A newborn infant is capable of growing into many different kinds of a person. His potentialities will be formed in part by the society into which he was born. Socialization is different from the process of maturation,

which inevitably occurs unless physical injury happens. Human behavior is formed by learning. It is more than a crude product of maturation. (16 p1)

> "The process (of learning) is not merely one of unfolding. Botanists tell us, for example, that microscopic examination of the tulip bulb reveals a blossom in miniature which under proper culture is merely elevated, enlarged and colored until it assumes the familiar form of the spring flower. The development of social behavior is not of this sort; there is no miniature social response already present and waiting to be unfolded. There is nothing to begin with, but biological imperatives and biological capabilities. In being irritated, in responding, and in learning, the organism literally changes itself." (20 p111)

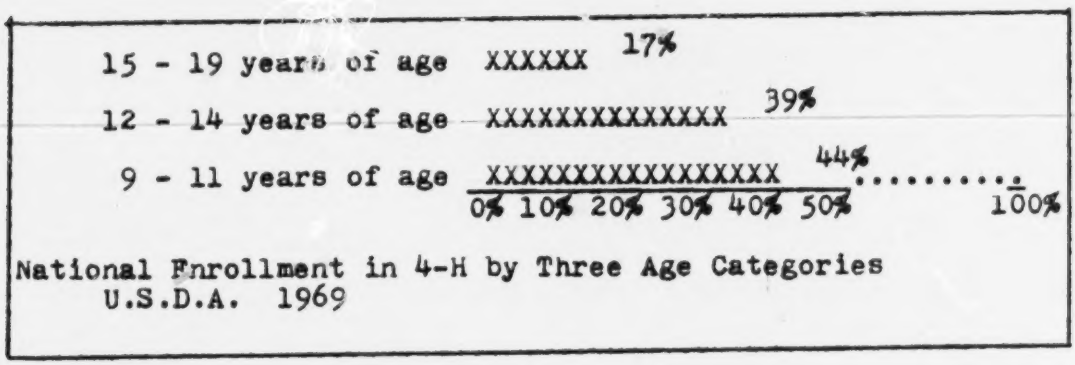
At each stage in life there are certain things an individual needs to learn in order to feel reasonably happy and successful and to be considered so by others. These learning tasks are called developmental tasks because they arise at or about a certain age in a person's life. Developmental task pressure results from both internal and external forces.

> "There is usually a 'best' time for a child to learn each task successfully. When physical and psychological development are adequate for accomplishment, when accomplishment is expected by the society in which one lives, and when the person himself is ready to strive for accomplishment - then is the best time to learn any specific task. That is the 'teachable moment.'"
>
> "Specific tasks to be accomplished by an individual may change as he moves from one section of the life cycle to the next. Socialization is not just a process for the young, adults are in the process of being socialized as they must adjust to new ideas and environments." (5 p46)

Some of life's developmental tasks never end, but may recur over a long period of time. Learning to get along with age

mates or learning the correct masculine social role are examples of such tasks. In contrast the task of learning to walk generally needs to be learned only once. (16 p31)

As the focus of this paper is on understanding the socialization of youth from the perspective of the adult 4-H socializer, it may be well at this point to review some of the main developmental tasks of 4-H age youth, 9 to 19 years of age.



National Enrollment in 4-H by Three Age Categories
U.S.D.A. 1969

A central feature of socialization of youth in this age range is the gradual introduction of agents and agencies of socialization other than the family. The child will have come into contact with at least some of these agents before. For example, he will have attended school before. But the impact of these "outside" socializers increases during this age range. Youth approaching this age range will have had some group learning experience, too; the tasks associated with physical management, while far from being irrelevant, become secondary to new tasks. These tasks include, acquiring a set of values, learning relevant adult skills, establishing heterosexual relationships, and preparing to accept the responsibilities of the adult status. (18 p625)

Established norms and/or developmental characteristics have been set for youth in the various age groupings. Table 1 is an example of such listings. Charts such as these outlining developmental tasks of youth can be useful in helping the extension agent understand the totality of growth that takes place over an age range. This knowledge may be used in planning programs for youth and in working with the adult leaders.

Caution is advised, however, in intepreting such literature or comparing an individual child with the "established" norm. The norm may represent the mean, median or mode of a sample population.

It could be expected that each child would deviate from the norm. (9 p95) These norms may also be changing. Youngsters today may be maturing physically earlier than their grandparents and therefore be ready for some developmental tasks at an earlier age. (39 p123) Societal expectations change and this can influence the timing of some developmental tasks. Dating at an earlier age may not only be accepted by adults but expected. This societal change can affect the timing of the youth's task of developing heterosexual relationships.

At the other end of the youth age range, societal expectations may frustrate or complicate the completion of developmental tasks of the teen. The number of years of dependency has increased over the years. While youth may be maturing physically earlier, society may be making the child less mature. (27 p162)

TABLE 1 Character Educational Goals for Boys in Late Childhood
(Adapted from Toward Understanding Boys Series by Clarence Moser)

DEVELOPMENTAL TASKS	ATTITUDES - To Be Developing
1. Feeling accepted and effective as a member of his own age and sex contemporaries.	1. A continuing eagerness to develop skills and abilities - to be good at something.
2. Beginning to find joy in making others happy.	2. A growing willingness to do for others what he hopes they will do for him.
3. Responding to the group, yet feeling that he can rely upon his home.	3. A growing security in his relations with others outside the family.
4. Winning his way with a group.	4. A growing eagerness to be a part of a group, and loyality to it.
5. Accepting a masculine role in his group life.	5. A sense of responsibility for his body, appreciation of its function and necessary care.
6. Being confident of his ability to grow up.	6. A growing ability to face defeat and yet keep trying.
7. Feeling useful to someone or something.	7. A growing confidence in his ability to be useful or helpful.
8. Increasing his acquaintance with the adult world.	8. A growing desire to know more about the adult world.
9. Daring to express his feeling for adventure.	9. A growing willingness to step outside the familar surroundings of family or school.
10. Increasing his feeling for fair play and justice.	10. A growing appreciation of the importance of laws and the necessity of being law-abiding.

This paradox will be examined further in chapters III and IV.

Socialization from the Perspective of Society

Socialization can be defined as the means by which social and cultural continuity are attained or the process of inducing members of a society to do what they must do so that society can function properly. (14 p7) A newborn child enters an ongoing social system and to function properly he must internalize the appropriate roles, values and norms of that system.

- Status refers to a position in a social structure. One individual may have many statuses, male, father, husband, or 4-H agent. Each status that an individual assumes also carries with it certain roles or behavior patterns that are considered normal. Most roles are performed in the presence of other people. To interact effectively people need to know the status roles of others in addition to their own. This enables them to know what to expect of others and how to act toward them. (12 p19)

- Values are things or achievements that a social system considers good, and therefore to be sought, implying that the opposites are bad. No individual, group, or community can have or achieve all that they might want to. All of the possible goals have to be ranked resulting in the formation of a value system.

- Norms are the accepted rules and standards of a system and set the limits in which roles are expected to be played.

The degree to which individuals internalize the values, norms and roles are of concern to the entire community. To survive, a group needs regularity and order. Social control, a function of the community, can be either internal or external, the distinction being restraints which the individual imposes on himself and restraints which are imposed by others. The process through which internal controls are developed is a part of the socialization process. There are four levels of social control: Socialization, suggestion, persuasion, and then coercion. When the socialization process does not control an individual then a different level of social control must be used. (35 p382) (See Table 2)

TABLE 2

SOCIALIZATION

To so control the social environment that the child while growing up incorporates into his own personality structure as attitudes the values set forth by the community; accepts as "natural" the hierarchy of community status; and learns as "proper" the officially prescribed norms and/or rules, governing the behavior of those occupying the various statuses together with the re-enforcing explanations as to why the social world is as it is.

SUGGESTION

To set up as copies to be initated those whose behavior best conforms to the values of the community, indicating the rewards which follow such emulation. To initiate thoughts which will cause community members to think that they have arrived at conclusions on their own.

PERSUASION

To gain concurrence by appeal both to emotion and reason, using both formal media and informal face-to-face discussion.

COERCION

To gain acquiescence to community demands using nonviolent psychological pressure to induce compliance (threat of punishment) and violent physical force to bring about submission.

How the Process of Socialization is Accomplished

Socialization occurs primarily through social interaction. The child learns the ways of the group through contact with people who know and carry the patterns of society, not through meeting the culture in the abstract. (12 p31) A child develops as he is stimulated by other people. Not all persons will have the same amount of impact on the socializee. Some by virtue of their position (mother) or by their appearance at certain times in his life (teacher) will have more influence than others. These "significant others" can teach through: Granting rewards or inflicting punishments, example or role model or direct instruction.

Socialization is not limited to planned learning. Children will imitate and copy unconscious behavior exhibited by significant others. (19 p2) "Emotional attachments underlie the motivation to learn." (12 p31)

Man is also capable of reflective thought, the ability to take the position of another person and view himself as an object. As he becomes familiar with many roles and statuses

he can use the knowledge in: Role rehearsing, daydreaming or self evaluation. (30 p8) (12 p37)

The development of self image is an important concept. How this self image develops depends in large measure on what the individual perceives the reactions of "significant others" toward him to be. If a child is continually told that he is an obnoxious person, he may come to think of himself in those terms. The phrase "don't give it to the dummy, he can't do it" speaks to this point. A poor self image may mean the child has little resistance to juvenile delinquency while a good self image may be an internal deterrent to such behavior. (37 p 515)

Individuals can be looked at as the product of the socialization process. (18 p617) (7 p121) As such the structured aspects of his social experience, the network of social relationships in which he lives, affect the end product. A child being raised in a suburb will have different role models to follow than a child being raised on a farm. (2 p54)

It may again be necessary to point out that although the ways in which socialization occurs may be simular, each person will develope into a distinct individual. Two individuals may perceive the same role model differently. Differences in physical and mental abilities will effect socialization growth.

Agents of Socialization

In the course of the day a youth may come into contact with a

maze of socializing agents. These agents compete for the attention of the child and each may carry a conflicting message. Contact with these agents may start in the morning with the parents. In school he will come under the influence of several different teachers, at lunch he may eat with a peer group, and after school go to a 4-H club meeting led by a volunteer adult. The term "Socialization Agent" does not necessarily denote an individual; it can be a group, agency or institution. (25 p334)

In addition to viewing the community as an economic or physical unit we might view it as a "socialization community." Within the framework of such a community we can identify a clustering of personnel that have a vested interest in influencing the behavior and values of the young, each with a more or less articulated program: (24 p335)

- The formal educational system
- The churches with their programs for the young
- Leisure-time agencies; character education, recreation
- Social control & protective agencies; police, courts
- Therapeutic, handicap, resocialization service agencies
- Employment and work supervisors who hire the young
- Political leaders who have an interest in involving the young in political activities, such as civil rights

Most of the program planners and policy makers of these programs have no direct contact with the socializee but work

through others, such as 4-H leaders.

- There are two populations of direct agents; the parents or family, and the peer group.

- The mass media; T.V., radio, and the printed sheet can also be considered a socialization agent.

It can be seen then that in the life of a youngster there are a number of socialization agents. Their influence is dependent on several variables such as: Frequency of contact, control over rewards and punishments, or status held by the agent or agency. Each socializee is faced with the task of coping with the problems of responding to the varied sources of influences. (25 p346)

Chapter III will examine three agents of socialization in more detail: The family, the peer group, and the school system. These three are perhaps the major socializing agents, or significant others, of youth in the 4-H age range. (5 p826)

Before looking at these agents, however, it may be advisable to review the nature and content of social change as it is occurring in the American society. Social change affects the socialization process. It can affect the timing or nature of developmental tasks and the effectiveness of socialization agents. Chapter II will concentrate on this topic.

CHAPTER II

Social Change in the American Society

Social change can affect the socialization of the young in at least two ways. It can change the size and shape of the socialization arena of the young. It can also cause changes in the role performance of socialization agents. Extension agents need to know not only specific change, but the nature, process, and potential affects of social change.(11 p18)

This chapter will briefly describe the nature, process, and rate of social change. It will also outline some of the major changes that are taking place in the American society.

Change produces problems. Change represents a deviation away from what has become custom. A relationship exists between social change and social problems. When man faces a problem he may change his relationships to solve them. This adjustment may in turn cause changes to occur in relationships he did not anticipate. Solving problems can produce changes which in turn will create more problems.(43 p537)

Most people realize that change is now taking place at a rapid rate. Change seems to be a main trait of our time.

J. Lewis Powell, of the office of Assistant Secretary of Defense, illustrated the rate of change in the following manner:

50,000 Years of Man's History Condensed Into 50 years

1. Ten years ago man stopped being a cave man.
2. Two years ago Christianity would have appeared.
3. Twenty days ago, electricity.
4. Ten days ago, the radio.
5. The commercial jet would be less than one day old.
6. Man landed on the moon in the last few seconds.

There are three ways in which social change can occur.(35 p465)

- Cataclysmic; a major flood, for example, would disrupt the social system of a community.
- Planned change: people consciously initiating social change by modifying segments of community life. School consolidation is an example.
  Sociocultural drift: change occurring in a haphazard way. An example of such unexpected change might be shopping patterns changing as a result of changing the boundaries of a school district through consolidation.

Social change in the community can be seen to occur at four different levels: (35 p466)

- The total community. Change at this level are slow

and may occur only over a long period of time. The shift toward secularization is one example.

- Pan-community, changes occurring in the relationships between the community and other area bound units such as the school district, township or state. Change in one unit, as in school consolidation, will cause changes in its relationship to the community. The community may potentially lose some of its functions, such as police protection, or even become swallowed up by another unit.

- Changes in the dimension and elements of community structure. The family and school relation changing from one of close cooperation to one of apathy.

- Component change. Change taking place in a component of a community such as the family may not be considered a community change as such. However, change occurring in the structure of a component of the community, such as the family, may cause change to take place on the community-wide scale. The working mother, for example, represents a change in the structure of the family. Such a change may threaten the socialization process of the young and in this way affect the relationship of the family, child and community.

Change then can be initiated from changes occurring in the mass society, pan-community level or from a component in the community.

The following is an outline of some of the major changes or trends that have and are taking place in American Society:

The Scientific Explosion

Ninety percent of all the scientists that ever lived are alive today. (1 p8) This fact helps to explain the tremendous increase in technology that has occurred over the past three decades. The increase in technical knowledge has increased the rate of two related processes, mechanization and specialization. Specialization increased as the complexity of tasks made it difficult for an individual to master more than a few skills. Mechanization, machines replacing manual labor, increased as the amount of technical knowledge made it possible and profitable.

Shifting Base of Social Participation

There is a trend away from social participation based on locality to social participation based on interest. Under locality based participation, families living in the same vicinity showed common interests. This type of social participation was prevalent in earlier pre-industrial communities. Social participation may be

now based on such interests as occupational and recreational patterns. (42 p187) For example, employees of I.B.M. may attend mostly I.B.M. sponsored activities, a wives' club or bowling team.

Shift in Orientation of Community Systems

There is a trend for systems or institutions in the communities to become linked to similar institutions. In other communities, on the state and/or the national level. Examples could include school systems, labor unions, or church denominations.(42 p175) This trend toward extra community ties tends to orient the individual toward specialized vertical systems. He becomes guided then by the role expectations of this vertical system as well as the role expectations of the community. (42 p174) This shift in association has been described as moving away from the horizontal, local community, to the vertical, state and/or national organization.

Improved Transportation and Communication

Great progress has been made in the comfort and speed of transportation. The types and availability of communication has tended to increase rapidly in the past few years. It is possible for events taking place in one community to become common knowledge in all parts of the county. Ease of travel allows people to come

into contact with a wider range of people and the frequency of contact may increase. More alternatives can be seen by individuals.

Change in Some Value Orientations

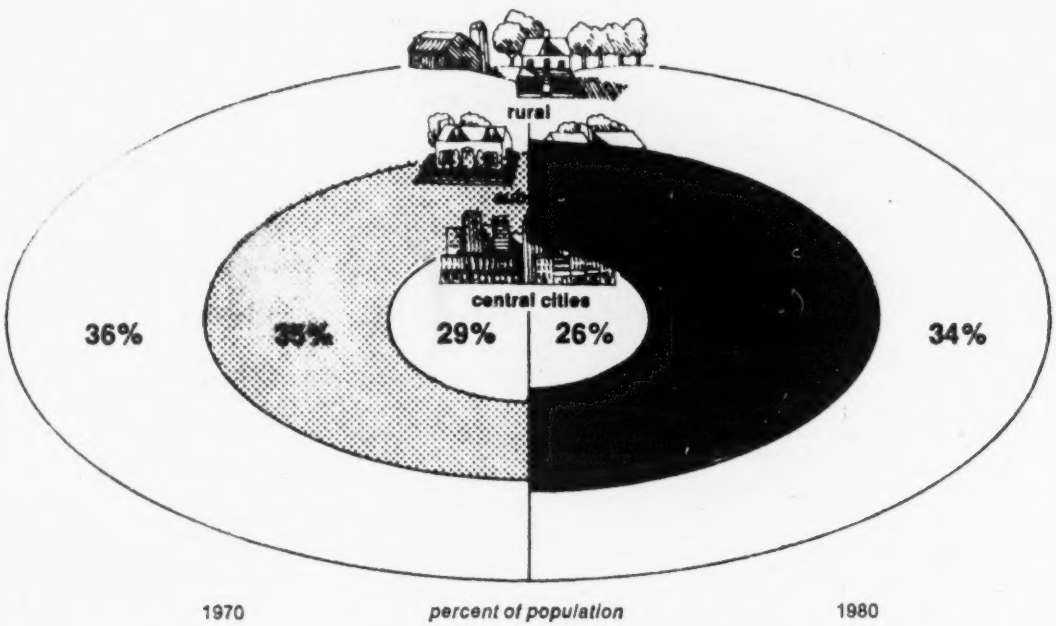
Some examples of shifts in values are: (1) Secularization, codes of conduct being based on rational considerations rather than on tradition. For example when a youth becomes a delinquent we may no longer just punish him but may ask the question, "why?" and seek to solve the problem or cause. (2) The acceptance of planning and the specialist. This can be seen in the way communities plan to solve problems or the way parents have come to seek the advice of "experts." (3) The acceptance of governmental activity in many areas previously thought of as functions of the family or church. Social Security and Head Start are two examples.

Urbanization and Suburbanization

Demographic studies have shown a general pattern of population growth and population shift. Since 1940 there has been a major increase in the areas immediately surrounding the cities. The shift and growth expectations are shown in figure 1.(see Fig. 1)

Suburbs will get bigger and richer

For years the suburbs have been growing more than five times as fast as the cities. Now they have over 35% of the population. By 1980 they'll have over 40%—and take in nearly half of all family income.



Increase in leisure time

The average work week has dropped from an average of 60 hours to 40 hours or less. This drop was due, in part, to the increase in mechanization and specialization that has taken place. Along with this increase in leisure time has come an increase in the number of potential activities for individuals and families.

CHAPTER III

Socialization Agents - The Family, The Peer Group, The School

In planning and implementing programs 4-H has traditionally, but not exclusively, worked with three socialization agents the family, the peer group, and the school system.

Many adult socialization agents including 4-H extension agents may hold a somewhat traditional image of these three agents, an image based in part on their own recollection and limited experience. While many realize that "times have changed," they may only have a vague notion as to the extent of this change.

Chapter II pointed out the rapidity of social change and broad types of social change. This chapter will give a brief description of some of the common traits of each of these three agents.

The American Family

The family unit has been considered by many to be the most important socialization agent. (12 p46) (25 p370) The family provides:

- the first unit for the child to have contact with and

in which to develop emotional ties. It then becomes the prototype of subsequent ties.

- protection from, or decides in part which of the outside forces will influence the child. What T.V. programs will he watch or in early life who he can play with.

- The setting for the child's first rewards and punishments, first image of himself, first models of behavior.

- The initial status for the youngster. The son of John Jones, the son of a doctor, or the son of a rag picker.

The family unit has under gone change. Its role and position in today's society are different than fifty or even ten years ago.

- The family has shifted from a unit of production to a unit of consumption. Fathers, and many mothers, now spend their working hours away from the home. The amount and type of family interaction has changed. The family in becoming the principal unit of consumption is the main target of the commercial enterprises.

- The amount of resources available to the average American family has increased significantly. The typical American earns more and lives better than ever

before. The median family income increased by 69.3% between 1950 and 1960, even with inflation the purchasing power went up. (10 p59)

- The American family has shifted, in part at least, some of its traditional functions to other institutions. Protection and education of the young are examples.

- More leisure time is now available to the family. The average work week is shorter and many home tasks have been made easier. The opportunity for family recreation has increased.

- The typical American family is now a nuclear unit consisting of the mother, father, and children. This in contrast to the extended family which have frequent contact with relatives across several generations.

In the contemporary community the family unit may become the sanctuary for the individual facing the anxieties of modern life (17 p128) The roles and relationship of the family members in changing decisions that were once made by the mother and/or father are open for discussions in which the child has a voice in the decision. (10 p65)

The Peer Group

The peer group differs from other socialization agents in several aspects:

- The peer group usually does not have an established structure with traditional statuses and norms.

- "It is the only aspect of the adolescent's experience that is not aimed at achieving adulthood." (15 p8) The family, the school and youth organizations attempt primarily to prepare the youth for adult roles.

- The peer group is made up entirely of individuals of like age status.

The peer group has certain distinctive functions which can not be easily fulfilled, if at all, by the more structured socialization agents: (12 p63)

- Provides experience in egalitarian types of relationships. It differs from the authority and subordinate relationships that frequently exist in the more structured institutions.

- Taboo subjects such as sex may be discussed more openly in the peer group.

- In the rapidly changing society the peer group may be in a better position than other socialization agents. The latest dances, manner of speech, or correct style of dress are readily known to the peer group.

- The peer group helps the youth become independent of the family and other institutions. It can help him develop a self image.

Free from the responsibilities of such tasks as helping to produce products for the home, the youth has more time to spend with his peer group. Increased ease of mobility has allowed the youth to expand the range of his peer group.

The adolescent peer group can be a good or bad influence from the adult point of view. In the "normal" process of growing up the youth uses the peer group to grow and develop and then leaves it. Some individuals who may not see a clear path to adulthood or lack identification with people in successful adult roles may work for peer group permanency. (15 p9)

There seems to be controversy over the extent or amount of influence that the peer group has over its members. One author, David Riesman, suggests that the peer group may have become more significant in the socialization of upper strata youth, as in the case of the "other directed individual." (35 p69) An article "Heroin Addiction Among Teens and Pre-Teens" appearing in the March 1970 issue of "Time" magazine pointed up the influence that the peer group plays, a much stronger role than any of the adult socializers in the heroin addict's life. In another source the question of parent-peer conflict is examined from the standpoint of influence each agent has on the decision making process of the teen. The conclusion of

the author was that the nature of the decision determined the reference group. (3 p390) Still another author expressed the opinion that the peer group may have more influence on the style of expression, and the family more on the content of expression. (27 p809)

The School System

The school system is recognized as being a central socialization agent of American youth. (2 p54) It is the socialization agent that influences all but a few of the total youth population. Its potential influence as a socialization agent can be seen in the amount of time a youth spends in the school system between the ages of five and eighteen. Outlined below are some of the characteristics of the school system as a socialization agent and the effect societal change has had on each characteristic:

- It is the social setting of the youth peer group society, the physical center that creates a sufficient demographic density to allow youth to build their own social world. (18 p833)

The impact or intensity of this youth culture may be higher in the larger school systems that prevail today. School consolidation, increase in the number of youth, less need for teen labor, and increased need for more technical skill or knowledge can explain part of the increase in size.

- The school personnel--teacher, coaches, or counselors--act as role models or represent the adult society to the school's youth.

The role performance of school personnel may have increased in importance. There is less opportunity for youth to interact with other community adults; being able to assist or see their father at work or obtaining part-time work with successful adults are examples. The question may be: Is the school personnel representative of the adult society, in terms of salary or status? (5 p848)

- The school system introduces youth to the institutionalization of control over his behavior. The school has sanctioning devices which they can use to reinforce socially acceptable behavior, grades are one example. (5 p844)

"Socially acceptable behavior" may be harder for the school system to define in today's society. The school administrator feels pressure from his own uncertainties, parental influence, and the youth peer group. The nature of sanctioning devices may also be ineffective or challenged.

- Most adults would view the school's prime function as one of preparing the young for adult life by equipping the youth with the skill and/or knowledge base needed for good citizenship and economic self sufficiency. (5 p844)

The task of equipping youth for future life or of teaching the necessary skills has become increasingly difficult in our rapidly changing society. Yet the school is expected to do more. The school system is now being expected to pick up some additional functions or expected to increase its efforts on some of the previously latent functions. Increasing its share of the task of socializing of the young is one such area. Parents, particularly middle class parents, have come to look to "experts" for advice or solutions of their problems. The school system and its personnel are sometimes seen as experts in the task of socializing the young. The phrase "I can't wait until my Jimmy gets in school so that <u>They</u> can straighten him out" is related to this point. The question may be, is the school as an institution or the personnel as they are trained best equipped to do the increased task? Are they in the position, in terms of the child's life space, to do the task?

At this point some additional points concerning the relationship between the peer group, family, and school will be made.

<u>School - Peer</u> The school may act as the buffer or set the limits, in part, in which the peer group may operate. The extent that each school does this can vary but the opportunity to do so does exist. (9 p847)

<u>School - Parent</u> Most parents realize that they can not do the full task of socializing the child and appreciate

the efforts of the school system. At the same time the relationship between the two agents may have deteriorated. The school system, as have other bureaucratic structures, has developed closer ties vertically to the county, state and national level. The ties at the local level may have decreased. (42 p175) The growth in the size of school systems can make it more difficult for the family to understand or communicate with it.

Parent - Peer Parents may not be in complete opposition to the peer group. Most realize that in order for the child to grow he must establish a good relationship with his peer group. In addition many parents derive a strong feeling of satisfaction in seeing their child being well liked by his peer group. He may ask the child what is expected of him by the peer group and will try and help the child meet its expectations. (27 p832)

It can be seen then that the role of, and relationships between these three socializing agents are changing. In turn the relationship of youth to these three agents are changing. It challenges the 4-H professional to examine how 4-H's relationships to these three institutions and youth have changed.

So far the process of socialization, the nature of socialization and its scope, and common traits of three socializing agents have been reviewed. Chapter IV will attempt to identify some of the difficulties confronting the efforts of adult socializers.

CHAPTER IV

Difficulties Confronting the Adult Socialization Agents

Are the traditional adult socialization agents doing an adequate job? Some challenge the committment of adult socialisers. They feel that socialization agents are willing to settle for human beings achieving less than their full potential. (28 p1)

Perhaps it is more than a question of committment. It may be that some socialization agents are confused or lack a clear picture of what they should do to help youth with this task.

This chapter will attempt to identify some of the difficulties associated with the task of youth socialization efforts in today's American society. Reviewing some of the difficulties can help explain why the task of socialization has not been perfected or why it is receiving attention or causing anxiety in parts of our society. These items have been grouped under four headings. Some items could have been placed under more than one heading.

Perceptions and Expectations

Today we are recognizing to a greater degree the problems

resulting from, or connected to, the socializing of the young. Part of this increase in awareness can be attributed to an increase in leisure time, material goods and people. Another explanation is that with the basic physical needs being satisfied by most of the people (80%) their attention is now being focused on psychological needs. (14 p1)

Youth groups which might be considered half socialized or unsocialized may now be considered more of a problem than they once were. In earlier time periods these groups may not have been large enough to be noticeable. (15 p12) Once there were roles and statuses available into which these individuals could be placed. (35 p122)

There is less agreement in society on what the role behavior of certain statuses should be. (10 p6) The traditional roles of some statuses are in the process of change. Some mothers, for example, work outside the home and/or handle the family finances. This can mean that there is less re-enforcement of role behavior a child confronts outside the home. People may be uncertain, for example, of what the correct behavior of a teen should be.

One test of the success of the socialization process lies in the ability of an individual to play the roles in which he may find himself. In our society these statuses and roles are constantly changing. Roles such as the steamboat captain

have gone out, others such as spaceman are coming in. Life is less of a "fixed play" than it once was. Some of the statuses in which an individual will plan a role tomorrow may not even exist today. (18 p616)

The "material" aspects or "physical" nature of repair and treatment is commonplace in the American society. This perception can affect the expectations of the family with regards to 4-H youth programs. (36) Parents may be unrealistic in their expectations of youth programs. They may fully expect that Boy Scouts will "round the guy out" or that 4-H will instill the desire to "Make the Best Better." If or when these agencies do not do the expected job criticism may be leveled at them by the parents.

Impact of Technology

Technology can affect the amount and rate of change. In times of rapid social change, a trait of our times, adults can become uncertain as to the validity and appropriateness of existing values as guidelines for youth. (18 p627) Increased financial resources can affect the value system and cause socialization agents to become confused. The value of fixing up the old, a broken toy for example, may not make much sense when the new item only costs two or three dollars. Denial of such opportunities as a college education becomes harder when the money is available. (8 pxiv)

Mobility and improved communication techniques, traits of the contemporary society, have allowed youth to come into contact with more social systems than was once possible. It is now easier for youth to escape the scrutiny of their parents. Mobility also permits or forces the family to shift locations several times during the developing years of the children. This may have a detrimental effect on the child in that he may be reluctant to establish deep associations for fear that he will later have to sever them. (35 p377)

Coordination and Opportunities

Our American society may have a "buck passing" orientation about the socialization responsibility.

> "The school person can say, 'We have to focus on his academic achievement, but that obviously is just a small part of the job', the leisure-time agency leader can say 'Our job is to provide fun and recreation, of course he'll learn some things from our activities, but this is not the serious part of growing up', and the parent usually says 'I'm not the expert on what he needs, I just do the best I can.'" (24 p38)

Socialization agents may find it difficult to talk of values and role requirements in that they may differ within different elements of the same society. The economic system may emphasize agressiveness and minimize charity while with the religious or political system the opposite may be true. (18 p619) Maybe this is what the kids are saying when they say we are not "telling it like it is" when we say society places high value on honesty and charity.

Each agent of socialization may emphasize certain role behaviors or values from its own point of view. (12 p45) There is a lack of dialogue between socializing agents on socialization goals. This may be due in part to guilt feelings or the lack of accomplishments, feelings of autonomy, or embarrassment about talking about theoretical stuff. (24 p340)

The trend has been toward families structured on the neclear unit in contrast to the once prevalent extended family kinship system. The kinship group served a useful purpose for society in that it would step in and exercise social control when needed. (35 p193) Parents had a ready source of advice to turn to.

The family has less control over the peer group in which his child will establish himself. The arena of the peer group has shifted from the neighborhood to the large consolidated school system.

There is a discrepancy between the capacity of adolescents to do and the opportunity for them to do it. For example, there are fewer opportunities for today's teen to do meaningful tasks in the family setting. When the family was a unit of production, youngsters had the experience of helping the family produce, they were useful, and this experience helped them to develop a sense of self worth. (18 p624) The demand for the right to vote at 18 may reflect the feeling of today's

youth in this respect. They feel that they have the ability and they want in on the decisions. Authorities such as Margaret Mead have noted this descrepancy. (38 p1)

Shifting Influence of Socialization Agents

Adult socializers such as the school system and parents have had to shift to new forms of power and adjust to new positions and roles. This shifting and adjusting can pose dilemmas for such agents and there is an accompanying potential loss of status with regard to the young. Such shifting can make it more difficult for them to socialize the young to the established norms.

- The family in shifting some of its "traditional" functions to other institutions may have lost some channels of communication; the child no longer works along side the parent, or the parent may no longer assist the child with arithmetic. The child, as he grows older, comes to realize that he is not so dependent on the family. (33)

- The school has had to change its forms of rewards and punishments contingent upon conformity to its standards both academic and deportment. Society has increasingly removed the right of schools to deprive or reject by expelling a student from its system. The use of physical restraints is likewise rejected. (8 pxv)

It needs to be pointed out that this trend is not all negative. The school, in losing its right to use physical restraints, may have been forced to find better methods in educating the young. The family in shifting some of its functions may now have more potential time to spend on the remaining ones. (10 p39) Opportunities exist for the family to establish new channels of communication, for example through recreational activities.

While some of the adult socialization agents may have lost socializing pressure the peer group may have gained in significance. At least two factors can be seen to account for this:

(1) The peer group has increased in size, in terms of percent of population and density as in the school system. As the density of youth population increases the influence of the adults over the child decreases. (18 p626)

(2) The youth of today may spend more of his time in the peer group. He may be free of home responsibilities and the adult society has no place for him so he hangs around his age mates.

It can mean in terms of child rearing economics, rewards and sanctions, that the peer group is in a good position to offer alternatives to the offerings of the other socializers. Substituting money as a modern means of rewarding youth for proper behavior may not be the answer. (31)

> "As schools get larger, as they come to embrace more and more of the student's lives, as the power of their elders to dictate to them is weaker, and as their interaction with adults becomes fewer and more attenuated, young people are thrown more and more upon their agemates for stimulation, for status, for satisfying social relationships, and for companionship in whatever activities, serious or trivial, they choose to pursue." (8 pxvii)

A potential problem exists in that the peer group can have both positive and negative effects on the youth. While it may serve as a sanctuary from adult demands it may also reject an individual and increase his sense of social isolation. (12 p06) In the peer group the child may learn the value of fair play but he may also learn how to bully others and be intolerant of people who are different. Adults may need to occasionally direct or supervise the peer group. (16 p70)

Recruiting the Adult Socializer

These next three difficulties reflect on the task of obtaining or recruiting adults to fill volunteer leadership roles in youth programs:

- In our society there are restraints against assuming the role responsibility of a socialization agent. An adult hesitating to discipline a neighbor child or report delinquent behavior are examples of the effect of these restraints. (25 p343) This makes the task of recruiting volunteer leaders more difficult.

- In some contemporary communities the family may have split allegiances. The father may work in a community

CHAPTER V

Implications and Conclusion

This chapter will attempt to show how a knowledge base of the socialization process, as it relates to youth today, can help the professional 4-H worker increase his effectiveness as a socialization agent.

This knowledge base can be helpful in formulating alternative explanations for observed behavior and guidelines in which to plan, implement, and evaluate 4-H program efforts. In addition, however, such a knowledge base may raise questions which the professional worker may not be able to answer, but hopefully will stimulate him to try and seek answers.

This chapter is not intended to be a complete index of all the implications that can be drawn from such a knowledge base. It is expected that the reader will see additional implications for the 4-H program based on his own experience.

Perhaps the largest benefit to be obtained is in gaining an increased awareness or appreciation of the complexity of the task of helping youth to become socialized in today's American society. Appreciating that the task has become more difficult, understanding that the roles or inputs of other socialization

agents have changed, and realizing how the arena in which youth are socialized has changed, challenges the professional worker to re-evaluate existing programs. It can also provide a better perspective from which to plan new program efforts.

An Improved Sense of Reality

One potential benefit that the professional 4-H worker can derive from increasing his knowledge base of the socialization task is appreciating that the 4-H efforts are only one entry into the youth's life space. It can encourage the worker to seek closer co-operation with other socialization agents, to set more realistic program goals, or to evaluate the entry behavior of the socializee better. For example, a citizenship education program will have more impact if it is co-ordinated with the family and the school. A good example of such co-ordinated 4-H effort can be seen in the conservation field day programs which involved the efforts of the family, school, 4-H and many different agencies.

It can remind the professional and day leader that efforts to change or guide the youth must take into consideration; that the child has already internalized and the alternative influences on him.

Better Leader Recruitment Techniques

In Chapter IV some of the forces or factors that caused adults to hesitate in accepting leadership roles were outlined. Understanding some of these forces, realizing that they exist,

can help the professional 4-H worker anticipate adult leadership recruitment problems and plan accordingly to overcome them. Some conclusions that might be drawn in this respect by the 4-H agent utilizing such a knowledge base are:

- As the 4-H project becomes less of a skill learning exercise and more of an abstract socializing vehicle, intended to help the youth internalize such values as appreciating hard work, the job or role of a 4-H club leader may appear to be more difficult. It may be one thing to ask a dairy farmer to teach dairy judging to farm youth and another to ask an insurance agent to be a leader of a youth club which has as a major goal to help youth develop into useful and productive citizens.

  Many parents may have unreasonable expectations of the 4-H program or they may not clearly see their role as a volunteer leader of a 4-H club. Their entry behavior may be one of expecting the 4-H club to operate with very little personal input on their part. Parents perceive the school system as a socializing agent that prefers parents to keep their distance. (25 p342) Perhaps this conception of not being needed or wanted carries over to the cooperative extension youth program.

Conclusions such as these may imply that new approaches to the task of recruiting adult leaders need to be used. Recruitment efforts might need to be started one step earlier. Perhaps an

attempt should be made to determine what are the preceptions held by parents in regards to the task of socializing the youth. Parents, or adults in general, might benefit from a program or series of programs designed to increase their knowledge of: (1) The socialization task and the nature of this task as it relates to youth in the American society. (2) The potential role that 4-H or similar youth programs can play in helping youth become socialized. (3) The responsibilities and potential role of adults in regard to the operation of such youth programs.

Recognizing Coordination Difficulties

An increased understanding of the working relationships within the socialization community can help the 4-H professional appreciate the need for and the difficulties in cooperating with other socialization agents. 4-H has been recently encouraged to develop closer cooperative relationships with other youth agencies. (42 p205) Insight into the potential problems will be needed if the 4-H professional does move into the role of a community youth specialist. (4 p17)

Recruiting and Training the Volunteer Leader

An increased knowledge base of the socialization task can aid the professional 4-H worker in evaluating and redirecting his present maintenance and training programs of volunteer leaders. The statement that the typical socialization agent often lacks standards and criteria on which to judge his performance can challenge the 4-H agent to examine his own

feedback system with his volunteer leaders. (25 p350) On what basis does the agent compliment or evaluate volunteer leaders? On the number of fair entries from their club? On the number of blue ribbon demonstrators in their clubs last year?

As program planners and trainers of socialization agents professional 4-H workers need to be aware of some of the possible attitudes and goal orientations held by existing and potential volunteer leaders; (23 p35 & 36)

- Having to substitute for inadequate parents, and consequently developing a hostile attitude toward the parent or other socialization agents.

- "To many socialization agents the desired socialization outcome of 'becoming a good citizen,' means teaching children obedience and conformity to what is expected of them." (23 p35)

- Adults who themselves resent authority and try to "become one of the kids" can potentially subvert the efforts of other adult socializers.

- Many adults fear indoctrinating youth with their own particular values or of competing with a more centrally responsible agent such as the parent. (23 p43)

These points signify the importance of the leader selection

process and of the need for an on-going training program. It emphasizes the need to clarify and operationalize the socialization goals of 4-H. Nor is it a concern which can be ignored. A child will imitate and identify with people he likes, copy their behavior and take on their values and this may occur just as much through unconscious unplanned learning. (19 p2) The 4-H leader will still be a role model representing the values and norms of the 4-H program.

> "As long as 'things' seem to be going OK little attempt is made to get evaluative feedback about the success of socialization efforts or to initiate continuing programs of in-service training which would provide the basis for the development of a high quality socialization process." (24 p343)

Can all 4-H professionals plead "not guilty" to such an indictment?

Understanding that it is more difficult for adults to adapt to new socializing techniques than to new mechanical skills may lead the professional 4-H worker to develop or utilize different training approaches. (25 p352) Introducing leaders to new ways of involving teens as leaders calls for different training methods than teaching a new sewing technique.

Planning, Implementing and Evaluation of Programs

Reviewing present program efforts from the perspective of socializing youth in a changing society can point up some inefficiencies, some programs may need to be dropped or adapted to today's world. For example, in our attempts to attract youth to our program, keep them off the street and do

"something respectful," too much time may be being spent on outdated "fun type" programs. Teen parties and exchange trips, while educational in themselves, may not be the most effective vehicle for our program efforts. They may be poor competition to the alternate activities available to today's teens. Maybe the time would be better spent in developing meaningful tasks for youth to tackle. This could involve time spent in convincing authorities to take a chance and allow the youth to do something constructive.

In another respect such a knowledge base allows the professional worker to take a fresh look at some existing programs. It can help point out or remind the worker of the strength of the program or point up areas that could be emphasized more. Looking at a 4-H camping program from such a perspective might highlight the following:

> Camp provides an opportunity for youth to develop or improve his self image. Camp can represent a new environment away from the pressures of the peer group and the family. It offers the youth a fresh start with a clean slate, no one has a image formed of him in their mind.
>
> The ratio of adults, counselors, to youth is lower as compared to the school system. The balance of competition to cooperation is potentially more equal in a camp setting.

- The professional worker has more opportunity to observe, evaluate, and guide the program socializers in camp than he does in the county. He can, for example, stress the importance of praising the youth in regard to the youth gaining a better self image. At camp he is in a position where he can observe good and bad techniques being used and then be able to either praise or redirect the socialization agent.

Reviewing with such a perspective can remind the agent that which is old is not necessarily out of date. The need for local 4-H clubs, for example, is occasionally viewed as an inefficient way to involve youth. It is suggested that 4-H work with youth, particularly teens, through mass programs. Youth may already be over exposed to the mass approach. The school system has grown to where the individual is only a small part of the total system. The 4-H club may be the vehicle by which individual efforts can be recognized and in which teens can assume leadership roles. In helping to socialize younger children the teens progress in their own socialization development. (25 p365) "Ceremonies that give emotional satisfaction are powerfully effective in the inculcation of values." (16 p71) Some of the traditional ceremonies of 4-H have been challenged. The candlelighting ceremony at camp and the 4-H pledge at club activities still have a place in today's program.

The 4-H professional needs the ability to accurately diagnose

the present norms held by the youth audience toward which his program efforts are aimed. This calls for an understanding of how norms are formed and how they can be influenced to change. (30 p4) In planning a clothing and grooming program for boys the attitudes held by the group and how they were formed must be considered. Representive teens or peer group leaders need to be involved in the planning of the program. The effectiveness of influence of the socialization agent may lie in his ability to create a creative compromise of conflicting values. (24 p339)

Appreciating Change and Challenges

The tendency for youth to be forced inward to their own society or peer group and to be isolated from the adult society, offers a challenge to the 4-H youth program. As mentioned in Chapter I youth must deal with the problem of being influenced by many socializers, each with different expectations of him. One way for the youth to deal with the problem is to select one agent as the dominant reference group. While this may resolve the dilemma of conflicting influence it can tend to inhibit the development of his own guidance system. (24 p346) Is society in a sense encouraging youth to look toward the peer group as the dominant reference group? It can say that it is more important than ever for 4-H to develop projects and activities where youth and adults can interact.

> "To all of this must be added one factor of transcendent importance. It is not enough that the young must be kept out of the labor market. They must be kept off the streets. We must find something for them to do - something respectable,

> something that can be justified in terms of traditional values as necessary or useful, and - preferably - something that they can do under the aegis and control of their elders. We are fearful - quite rightly, no doubt - of what will happen if our young are allowed to mill around, subject to the discipline of neither work nor any other adult dominated institution, free to work out their own patterns of living while they are marking time between childhood and adulthood." (8 pxviii)

Recognizing a Role of the Professional

Like it or not, the professional 4-H extension agent is looked upon as an "expert" of youth socialization. Volunteer leaders and even parents will continue to ask such questions as; "why do they act that way" or "what do I do when they....? They seek explanations not only in regards to 4-H activities but to youth socialization problems in general.

It may not be reasonable to expect the professional 4-H agent to be able to answer all of these questions. It is logical, however that he be knowledgeable in the field of youth socialization and perhaps be able to seek out an explanation or direct the question to a proper source.

Innovative Alternatives

Improving his background or increasing his knowledge base of the socialization task as it relates to youth today can help the professional 4-H worker perceive and develop new types of programs.

Recognizing the need and challenge to utilize the talents and

leadership potentials of today's teens could lead to the development of a county teen placement bureau. An agency to which all youth organizations or adult groups could turn and secure leadership and manpower. Such an agency may be set up on a school district, township or county level. The 4-H professional's role might be to initate interest and guide the youth in their development of such an agency. Keeping in mind that the youth should be the primary planners and organizers, the 4-H agent and/or leader might help identify projects which could utilize teen talents.

Realizing that there is potential benefit in establishing additional contact between youth and adults can suggest new alternatives to the 4-H professional. He might suggest, for example, to a local Kiwanis Club that instead of donating two hundred dollars for a dairy calf that they invite high school teens to spend one to three days in one month with them on the job. The role of the 4-H professional could be to: Develop an outline of such a program listing the potential benefits to all parties, act as liaison between the Kiwanis Club, school, and teen, and to see that such a program received the proper promotion and publicity.

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